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 ANF\Proposal 09\Woolf-Nuclear Policy

Notes on Amy F. Woolf, CRS, Nuclear Weapons in US national Security Policy: Past, Present, and Prospects
 December 30, 2008

Describing Bush's "tailored deterrence" as newly noting that nuclear weapons "could be used in attacks against a number of nations that might have developed and deployed chemical and biological weapons [or might be suspected of planning to do so! See Clinton vs. Libya, deep shelters], even if they did not possess nuclear weapons."
 [Summary]

But this implies that in "traditional" (earlier) nuclear policy, US nucs were threatened and targeted against only states (sic) that possessed nuclear weapons, NWS. Not true at all: most threats were against NNWS, mostly ones that were indeed allies of NWS, but sometimes ones that were not (Bush v. Iraq, 1991). Moreover, the mistaken implication suggests that the only purpose of the US nuc (threats) was to deter nuc attack, either all-out or limited (esc) by the adversary. Wrong again: these were US FU threats.

Moreover, the new Bush threats would surely not be limited to states that had (or were going to have) CBW/WMD capabilities: that would merely suggest an expansion of the (mistaken) category of potential targets, from NWS to WMD states. Indeed, Woolf says this: "Hence, the new policy seems more of a change in 'who' we will deter [she underrates the who] than it is a change in 'how' we will deter." [ask: why, under what circumstances...]

As before, Bush II surely intends to use nuc weapons (threats, or...) against non-WMD states, both those that might be preparing to acquire WMDs (Iran, deep facilities: threatened by all pres candidates in the last campaign) and those that are not.

[unrelated thought: Pakistan's nucs have almost surely bought Pakistan a large measure of deterrence over the last ten years! They have tested that severely!]

Woolf says that in the CW, the US (relied on nuclear weapons to deter an attack by the SU and its allies and to forestall the outbreak of a global war between the US and the SU." Presumably the latter refers to the desire to deter the SU or its allies from *escalating* a limited conflict—either by nuc FU or, short of that, by raising the conventional forces—to a point that challenged the US to use nucs or to preempt. (That could even apply to: the SU supplying or encouraging an ally, like Egypt, to enlarging a conventional conflict with a US ally, Israel, to the point where Israel used its nucs, challenging the SU to reply with nucs or to supply Egypt with nucs—see 1973—and thus challenge the US to use nucs...) (Or, to SU forces pursuing revolting and retreating East German forces across the border of West Germany...)

[NEED both for an Obama ground-up reconsideration of nuclear policy, AND a Congressional review of it, for the first time. IDEALLY: US/Obama glasnost (consult Gorbachev!) on nuclear weapons. OPERATION CANDOR at last!

Forestalling Armageddon!

Transparency of the Gates of Hell. Secrets of Armageddon. (see Bosch's *Inferno*). Ellsberg's *Inferno*. Design for *Inferno*. Inventing Hell. Planning Hell.

[Revealing war plans. Challenging Russia AND OTHER STATES to do the same!

[Exposing estimates of casualties: realistically, including not only fallout but fire, and nuclear winter.

[Congress to get targets and options at last (see Kerrey attempts).

[And while we're at it: Congressional hearings on COG, martial law, suspension of the Constitution.

[Congress to get all the information it has sought for eight years: attendees and proceedings of the Energy Task Force; OLC rulings; NSA targeting; memos on the legality of torture, etc. (not just FOIA, but answers to earlier demands, subpoenas)

[Congress to get witnesses it has sought, or subpoenad, from Bush Admin!

[Examine: How—little—Congress has attended to nuclear weapons policy over the last sixty years! What closed hearings? (Published?) What open hearings? What efforts—rebuffed? (see Sen. Kerrey)

(Note my effort to get Zablocki to reopen a hearing, on delegation.)

2. Myth: MAD as changing nuclear plans, targeting. MAD as our sole or primary basis for nuclear posture or use.

3. Bush II preemption—the “Bush doctrine”!— as a wholly new, unprecedented policy: either FU, preemption or D-L. [The antidote is NOT to “return to pre-Bush policy”! Bush II merely made policy explicit: and explicitly extended it—inexcusably-- into the post-CW environment (which Clinton had done implicitly).

4. Note the total lack of adequate justification (no matter how generously assessed) for retaining our current level of forces, or alert posture, into the post-SU period (since 1989, twenty years ago): either for damage-limiting or deterring surprise attack or backing up FU threats.

5. Vs. the attitude, “we want to look forward, not back.” Quite apart from assessing and dealing with past criminality (which **always** consists of “looking back”: to eschew the latter is to abandon efforts to apply the rule of law!): there is the question of whether to extend, modify or abandon current policies or attitudes inherited from the previous administration (including the mind-set of personnel actually carried over).

It's obvious in this case that BHO should not give the “benefit of the doubt” to judgments of this predecessor's administration! Virtually every decision, rule, policy should be open to skeptical examination! (Actually, Bush did exactly that on succeeding the Clinton administration: “If he did it, we don't”: see the policy on negotiations with North Korea. That was disastrous. But to apply that principle to **this** predecessor is only prudence, common sense.

And that applies to nuclear policies, **even where** Bush II was only following in the path of Clinton (whose nuclear policies were not, in some cases, as sound as Bush I's). “If (Clinton's policy: e.g. of counter-proliferation, by preemption) was good enough for Bush II, it needs to be looked at again, very critically.”

Thus, Obama and Congress should both look again, very critically, at the history of help and coverup with respect to Pakistan's nuclear policy;

And Turkey! **See Sibel Edmonds' charges!** (Hearings at last?!

And for that matter, Iraq (under Hussein: what Clinton chose to cover-up rather than pursue, Iraqgate) and Iran (the Shah), including chemical warfare.

And Israel. (Fat chance).

6. DE revelations: India 64, Gilpatric Committee, **real insider attitudes on proliferation** (Rusk, McNamara, Nixon/Kissinger...

--see German de-facto control of US/NATO weapons; and Khrushchev concern, **Berlin crises**

7. Obstacles to non-proliferation:

--US FU policy

--NATO FU policy: and “need for it” to assure cohesion in NATO and US leadership of it [US econ dominance in Europe]

--Incentives to proliferation—by Germany, in particular (and Japan)—in countries deprives of a US FU “umbrella”

--US FS/D-L posture

--MIC pressure for above policies, forces (jobs, votes, campaign contributions, profits, anti-cyclical (see 1961, Minuteman: Ball); and USAF/ civ hawks/ Iron Triangle (including Congress, and dispersed aerospace industry)

--US relation to Israel nucs

--US attitude to prolif by friends (even Japan, Germany; India, Pak; Israel;

--US priorities overriding prolif concerns (Pakistan, various phases; Iraq;

--MLF! In 64-67

--US (and other NWS) "private" rejection of abolition, or ever renunciation of "superiority", ever (vs. Art. VI, NPT)

--NPT encouragement of nuc power, and thus of "latent" nuc capabilities (threshold, dual-use...virtual nuc weapons states)

8. "Irony": Nuclear weapons that could be delivered to the territory of the US have been, for the last sixty-four years, **the only** potential threat to the national security of the U.S.: whether in small numbers (the Soviet threat of nuclear **retaliation**, from 1949-64: the fear of a large SU surprise attack was illusory), or large-scale devastation (SU retaliation after the first fifteen years of the CW to US preemption or escalation, or a SU or, now, Russian, false alarm, or "irrational, fatally unwise" preemption or prevention), or, since 1989, a terrorist attack or retaliation to US attack on a non-SU NWS.

Other events could be "against US interests" (corporate, or imperial), lessen or challenge our influence abroad or affect our economic welfare, but could significantly affect our "national security," let alone national survival or existence. **Nuclear weapons, and only nuclear weapons, could threaten all the latter. Thus, no country had a greater interest in averting the proliferation of nuclear weapons, even, or especially, to the SU: which clearly required abolition.**

Yet the US committed itself to the rejection of a realistic effort at abolition, or even, later, to preventing further proliferation, either to friends or, inevitably, to enemies, including terrorists.

[The SU had a strong interest in avoiding a further invasion from Germany, either into the SU or, after 1945-48, into its buffer states in East Europe. AND an interest in avoiding nuclear attack from the US or NATO. There did exist a non-nuclear SU threat of invasion of West Europe. (There was a belief—a myth?—that this "could not" be

deterred or contained by non-nuclear means; this was not without basis, yet was always deliberately exaggerated: see **my speeches for McNamara! (Book)**

Contrary to AJW's "Delicate Balance", there was **never** a real possibility that a surprise attack by the SU, or even a preemptive, damage-limiting attack, "might become a rational action" for the SU. Fears of this possibility were always based on illusions, or deliberate deceptions, seen as such at the time by authoritative analysts (e.g., Army and Navy Intelligence!) [Ask: why did not the CIA side with the Army and Navy at the time, 1958-61? Or even INR?! Ike and Gates did!] Neither before 1959, or ever after.

For perhaps fifteen years of the Cold War (not just the first four), US FU or even FS against the SU **could** be argued by some (mainly USAF: but also Eisenhower and Dulles) to be "rational" under some hypothetical, not-impossible (though never realized) circumstances, primarily SU invasion of West Europe or even, just West Germany (Berlin?! The most likely "trigger." No!) (See Ike/Dulles "brinkmanship"—**not** pure bluff—over Korea, Taiwan Straits, Jordan/Iraq/Kuwait,

Since about 1964, US FS has **never** been a rational action for the US under any possible circumstances, even as damage-limiting preemption against a supposed (but possibly illusory) SU preemptive attack. McNamara and JFK saw this as early as 1961 (deterred, reasonably, by even a small SU retaliation: though still prepared to respond by all-out US FS to "limited" SU use of nuclears against a US invasion force against Cuba in 1962.) Nevertheless, US strategic nuclear war plans are addressed **mainly** to this irrational "option" to this very day.

That can be rationalized only as a backup to US FU threats against allies of Russia, sustaining their credibility by threatening US escalation to FS (despite its dangerous irrationality) in case of Russian nuclear response to US FU. This **should** be a bluff; but as in all cases where elaborate, costly preparatory actions are taken to enhance the credibility of an intended bluff, there is a real risk that the threatened action will actually occur if the threat is challenged. The incentive to take such preparations, and the resulting risk that they will be carried out if the challenge occurs, **should** be sufficient reason to eschew such FU threats, and the preparations. But so far, that reason has not proved sufficient, either to reject the threats or the preparations for FS.

On Woolf: p. 1: "From the end of World War II...until the end of the Cold War in 1991, the US relied on nuclear weapons to deter Soviet aggression..." "The SU was (and Russia remains) the only nation that could pose a global challenge to US allies and interests and threaten to cause massive destruction in the US." "...the Soviet threat dominated US defense planning."

"Generally, the US sought to maintain 'nuclear and conventional capabilities sufficient to convince any potential aggressor that the costs of aggression would exceed any potential

gains that he might achieve.” (US DOD annual report to Congress, fiscal year 1985, by Caspar Weinberger, Feb. 1, 1984, p. 27)

Focus here is on “aggression” by others, mainly the SU (now Russia). Indeed, there was a concern about SU aggression against Berlin, West Germany, or West Europe. Or perhaps Yugoslavia or Iran (staying in Iran, 1946, or invading it later). (Or conceivably, in the eyes of the Republicans especially, as of 1952-53, against East Germany, Poland, Hungary or Czechoslovakia, all of which did occur: but neither Republicans or Democrats chose to recognize this as aggression which required a response.) Or in the eyes of Carter, by the SU—after (he provoked SU) invasion of Afghanistan—against Iran or the Middle East.

But was Chinese entry into North Korea as “UN” forces approached their borders in 1950—after being warned off by China—“aggression”? (North Korea’s attack, yes. It was undeterred by, among other things, US nuclear weapons: as was Soviet encouragement and support of the attack: possibly reflecting the SU nuclear test in 1949. A failure of deterrence by US nuclear “superiority.” As was the Chinese entry.)

The North Vietnamese resistance to French neo-colonialism, 1946-54 was **not aggression** (whatever one makes of the French effort, or US support of it, in terms of “aggression”: not a clear legal case, on the basis of the UN Charter, though scarcely legitimate for the US in terms of US declaratory policy or traditional ideals, or the Atlantic Charter). Nor was Chinese support of the Vietnamese effort, at Dienbienphu. Yet both evoked a US offer of nuclear weapons for FU to the French in 1954.

Nor was US FU threat against North Vietnamese invasion of SVN after violations of the Geneva Accords’ promise of elections a threat against “aggression.” Nor LBJ’s threats through Seacord in 1964. Nor would Chinese conventional response to US intervention in Laos, have been “aggression.”

US FU threats to deter these interventions by the SU or China were not deterring “aggression.” It would be easier—though not necessarily compelling—to label the US interventions as “aggression” rather than the possible responses to them, which US FU threats were meant to deter. Less controversially, one could say that the main purpose of these FU threats was to deter Soviet (or Chinese Communist) non-nuclear responses to **neo-imperialist interventions** by the US or its allies or clients. The latter might or might not arguably constitute “aggression” in terms of international law, but the responses or escalations being deterred by US FU threats (or the possibility of them) would **not**, in most cases, have constituted “aggression.”

The “interests” being protected by these US threats were **imperial** interests (as distinct from core national security or territorial interests). However one regarded the legitimacy or urgency of these interests, the nuclear first-use threats used by the US to protect them were judged by most nations in the world (excepting NATO nations and Israel, as late as 1981) to be threats of criminal action, indeed, of “the greatest crime against humanity.”

[Issue, for book: are such threats themselves criminal? Immoral? See two sides on this, with Catholic Church on both sides.]

Thus, when Woolf says (. 1) “[US] Nuclear forces were sized to deter the Soviet threat,” this is true, but one must understand this to include in most cases (aside from a threat to Western Europe) the Soviet [or Chinese] threat to US imperial interests, the threat to counter US imperial interventions globally, not generally a threat of Soviet aggression.

To the extent that US bombing, or potential nuclear bombing, of North Vietnam, 1965-73, could be regarded as aggression (as some, including Richard Falk and Noam Chomsky, argue) then it was the “Soviet threat” *to respond to US aggression* that “dominated US defense planning” in that era. Likewise, in that period “nuclear forces were sized to deter” *this* Soviet threat, not a threat of Soviet aggression.

Behind the scenes from early 1966 on, former president Eisenhower was urging LBJ to use tactical nuclear weapons freely both in North Vietnam or, if necessary, in the South. He was presumably doing so in confidence that US nuclear forces were sized adequately to deter either the Soviet Union or China from responding anywhere to such attacks on their ally with their own tactical nuclear weapons. (In this confidence he was *almost* surely justified, though LBJ did not choose to test his recommendation. Nixon, Ike’s former vice president during his earlier brinkmanship, shared Eisenhower’s confidence and, in contrast to JFK and LBJ, was ready to act on it.)

Woolf:” Nuclear forces were sized to deter the Soviet threat; these were then thought to be sufficient to deter or respond to the ‘lesser included cases’ of threats from other nations. Although there were often debates about the numbers and types of weapons that the US should deploy in its nuclear arsenal, there was little doubt, or debate, among analysts, experts, and government officials about the need for the US to deter the Soviet threat.

“This widespread consensus about the nature of the threat to the US and its allies, and the need for nuclear weapons to deter and response to this threat, began to dissolve during the 1990s, after the demise of the Soviet Union.”

The “threat” to Berlin virtually disappeared after the Missile Crisis in 1962 (and the Wall in 1961); real concern about SU aggression against West Germany or Europe had disappeared, if not about the same time, by the time of OstPolitik (1971?) (though the Soviets maintained crazy plans and preparations for blitzkrieg as a response to a Western attack; e.g., might these have been invoked as part of the response to the false alarm of a US FS under Reagan in 1983?!)

Moreover, Carter purported to fear Soviet aggression in the Middle East, in connection with the invasion of Afghanistan: hence, the Carter Doctrine, with mobilization, Rapid Response Force and FU threats. But this deserves a close reexamination in light of Brzezinski’s revelation that they deliberately chose to provoke this invasion by US covert operations six months earlier! Did they really fear Soviet intentions? Same for the

nuclear crisis of the summer of 1980, SU mobilizing on the border of Iran: this was in context of US plans for a large-scale intervention in Iran, after the first hostage raid.

QUESTION: Did the CIA estimators at the time know of either of these covert operations, as provoking the Soviet actions or preparations? (I don't think DDI estimators in 1962 looking at the Soviets and Cuba knew of Mongoose! In 1964, did they all know about 34A, as they looked at the Tonkin Gulf incidents?! Certainly, Carter didn't tell the public (Congress? Who? Intell Committees?) about his provocation of the Soviets in Afghanistan before the SU invasion! OR about any aspect of the crisis in the summer of 1980, despite the Anderson leaks.

The point of my comments above is that after 1963 (unless with respect to the ME in 1980), US FU and FS nuclear threats had no relation to possible (i.e. at all likely) "aggression" by Soviets or their allies. (Even earlier: would Chinese attacks on Quemoy or Matsu have been "aggression"? Yet they were focused on the Soviets and their allies. The point was to deter SU counter-moves or escalations responding to US neo-imperial (or just say, imperial) interventions against Soviet or Chinese allies or client states. US nuclear policy was designed above all **to maintain the US informal empire**, against erosion by internal rebellion (possibly supported by the SU or China), election (! See Iran, Guatemala, Chile, SVN, Brazil, Indonesia: these were countered by covert ops, but might have led to US intervention, as in VN) or breakaway (Iraq, Panama). The US informal empire simply was not threatened by the prospect of external aggression (except in Europe, and that not really in our minds after 1962), and our nuclear forces were not really "sized against" that prospect, except nominally.

Perhaps contrary to Chomsky (?), the "defense" posture of each side **was** to some extent sized against the other superpower, not merely against the prospect of internal revolt and suppression within its own sphere. Each did have reason to fear that the other might encourage and support rebellious struggles within its own sphere, might try to chip away at it. Our nuclear posture was intended and sized above all to deter SU military involvement—non-nuclear, or nuclear responses to our FU-- in responding to and complicating our efforts to suppress or reverse revolts (by grass-roots or leaders, former puppets or new leaders) within our own sphere.

We wanted to be able to threaten and if necessary carry out limited nuclear attacks when necessary to maintain our control of client states within our global sphere, not only in Europe but worldwide, especially in the Third World (the former colonial area). In this sense, our posture was defensive: defending our informal empire (including Europe), not our own territory. It was not offensive in the sense of aiming to expand our sphere by force (Republican hopes of roll-back were not implemented: though **a military and right-wing Republican desire to roll back Communism in China or punish Communist China with destruction was, I have come to believe, a major covert objective: should this be a thesis of my book?**)

These threats could only be credible if we had some basis for confidence that, if carried out, they would not lead to nuclear responses by the SU or China. Since credible FU threats were seen as essential (or at least, very valuable, at least as insurance) to maintenance of our empire, they required as backup a US strategic “superiority” (once monopoly had been lost, in 1949 and, for China, in 1964) sufficient to make it credible that nuclear attacks, however limited and “proportional” to our own FU, risked nuclear escalation or even first-strike, disarming preemptive attack.

Were FU threats really essential? For Europe, the case was strong and widely believed (though this was for various wishful reasons); it was deceptively marketed to allies and populations. And this was enough to “size” the forces at a very high level. Were they necessary elsewhere? (The sort of cases that arose both in the Fifties and to this day). For South Vietnam, 1954-64 (to deter NVN invasion): yes. Berlin: yes. Iran (actually, northern Iran): yes. Laos: yes. (To win in VN, assuming this required invasion of NVN and sanctuaries: yes). Rest of ME: probably not (was nuclear aspect of Carter Doctrine necessary? aside from northern Iran, where he did apply it in 1980!)

But outside Europe, did we “really need” this empire, i.e. these outposts? At this risk, or any comparable risk or danger? McNamara, 1965 to Goodwin, referring to SEA: No. Even, ME? (Big question, especially now. Surely we don’t “need”/require FU threats.) Even for Europe, **the threat should have been a total bluff, to be rational, from the mid-50’s at the latest (SU medium-range TN weapons). It wasn’t: which made it the most irrational policy in the history of humanity.** Herman Kahn’s calculations suggesting that it was “worth” tens of millions of dead (actually, nuclear winter would have been the result: the death of all, or of billions) were **insane**, though he claimed they evoked agreement from elite audiences.

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After the Cold War 1989-90: (the Gulf War could be seen as the first post-CW war; it did involve FU threats, against a NNWS, a signer of the NPT, a former client of the SU, which remained close in lead-up to war but not a party),

“some argued” that “the US should declare that nuclear weapons would serve only as ‘weapons of last resort’ to deter nuclear attacks [NFU!] or possibly other catastrophic attacks.” P. 2 (“no first-WMD’s”? I found the latter pressed in DC in 1992-93; I now suspect this was already aimed at a future conflict with Iraq, believed to have CBW weapons; perhaps originated with Wolfowitz et al, of the 1992 strategy paper, but picked up by Ash Carter? And...]

Woolf notes that in Foreign Affairs, Spring 1993, Bundy, Crowe and Drell advocated a doctrine of “defensive last resort,” where nucs would be “reserved for use in only the most dire circumstances.”

But the latter was already the public's understanding (though in the Gulf War, public opinion had shifted in the opposite direction; for the first time, with the CW danger of global war "eliminated," a sizeable minority, over 30%, supported using nucs to save American lives in conflict, or in case of a stalemate.)

Perhaps the greatest obstacle to a policy of NFU had been—between 1945 and 1990, 45 years—the "need" to oppose a FU threat to the danger of a Soviet assault on Europe (and Berlin!)—which simply could not be argued after 1991. (Also, tacitly, pressure by Israel supporters not to put pressure on Israeli FU policy: which, like NATO, could be argued to relate to "direst circumstances" (as allowed for in the World Court advisory judgment).

"Others argued" that the US "needed a credible nuclear deterrent to 'hedge' against the possibility of a resurgence of the Russian threat. (William J. Perry, 1994 Nuclear Posture Review; and see Perry, Sept. 20, 1994. US would alter (?) its nuclear forces so tht it could both "lead" to further reductions in nuclear weapons and "hedge" against an unexpected development in Russia." (See AJW/RAND: "insurance" that increases the probability of the danger insured against. Contradictory criteria; Einstein, "you cannot simultaneously prepare for war and... vs. Roman, *si vis pacis, para bellum*...; note, this relates to expanding and maintaining empire! And comment: Latin is a dead language...)

(Isn't Perry one of the new Gang of Four advocating abolition?)

"Although many analysts outside government hoped the United States would sharply limit the role of nuclear weapons after the end of the Cold War, the Clinton Administration did not adopt a more restrictive, or "last resort," posture for U.S. nuclear weapons. Throughout the 1990s, the Clinton Administration argued that, in addition to serving as a hedge against the potential resurgence of a Russian threat, nuclear weapons remained important to deter the range of threats faced by the United States. It highlighted, in its 1999 National Security Strategy, that "the United States must continue to maintain a robust triad of strategic forces sufficient to deter any hostile foreign leadership with access to nuclear forces and to convince it that seeking a nuclear advantage would be futile." Furthermore, nuclear deterrence would not necessarily be limited to potential aggressors with nuclear weapons. Although the United States did not explicitly threaten the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states, Assistant Secretary of Defense Edward Warner did indicate in testimony before Congress that "the very existence of U.S. strategic and theater nuclear forces, backed by highly capable conventional forces, should certainly give pause to any rogue leader contemplating the use of WMD [weapons of mass destruction; i.e., nuclear, chemical and biological weapons] against the United States, its overseas deployed forces, or its allies."⁴

Thus, Perry/Clinton anticipated (post-CW) the same role for nuclear weapons as the Bush II regime. It includes the Wolowitz/Cheney/Bush I notion of deterring anyone (not just a

resurgent Russia) from even attempting to achieve “an advantage” (=take away our “superiority,” gain superiority) in posture.

W. says that the Bush Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) in early 2002 merely **reduced** the rhetorical focus on Russia. It has, instead, emphasized that nuclear weapons “provide credible capabilities to deter a wide range of threats, including weapons of mass destruction and large-scale conventional military force.”

W. notes that the US maintains nuclear forces with much of the same size and shape as it did during the 1990's.

But there is growing agreement that the role of nuclear weapons must be addressed (not only, number and type of weapons, or new warheads): in order for there to be “political support” (! Or effective resistance) to the Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW).

[Aha! Will this—and the replacement of the whole production complex—be the focus, or the basis, for the new discussion? Who will be discussing this within the BHO admin, or Congress, or outside? **Ask Paine; Cirincione; Kimball; Perkovich.**

[get papers from Lifton NY conference (Kuznick, Krieger): comment, as on this.]

[need for a Roles and Missions study and debate—and our recommendations—including consideration of the long-run, goal of abolition (BHO), real non-proliferation strategy (relation—oh dear—to global warming, with possible increased reliance on nuclear energy worldwide—Chu—rather than abandonment!)]

For once, at last, this debate/hearings should include knowledge of past and current nuclear planning, targets, objectives, comprehensive effects (including fire—Lynn Eden—nuclear winter, effects on neutrals and allies.

My book, thesis/hypothesis: never did US policy really consider, or even mention, effects of large-scale nuclear war on allies or neutrals! Nor truly seek to minimize civilian casualties, in “enemy” (or “enslaved”) populations. (Or neutrals, allies! Willingness to let these depend on “which way the wind blows.” See Herman Kahn calculations of “acceptable” damage, to prevent SU control of West Europe.)

Compare this (oddly, I don't think I ever have) to USG unwillingness to estimate civilian casualties to be expected in Vietnam; or suffered in Panama, or Gulf War; or now, in Iraq (or earlier, during sanctions). (Of course, it was a surprise to me that the JCS **had** privately calculated these expected casualties at all, in 1961). Note question: Is this reticence “essential,” because “the US public would not accept” (whatever that might mean) realistic estimates [as Brian Willson hopes, or Noam Chomsky claims to believe]; or is it simply convenient, prudent, politic, because public knowledge of the realities would create something of a public relations problem, controversy, discussion, a complication, which would have to be dealt with, and which would be surmounted. See torture.)

[BHO could easily “reduce the number of deployed forces and limit the role of nuclear weapons” (W: as most studies recommend) without radically or even significantly changing the role or its effects on proliferation and danger.

Everyone—including nuc hawks—recognizes a need to **change the rationale** for nuc weapons—i.e. for maintaining large nuc forces and perhaps new weapons!—since 1991 and 2001. (Making 2001 serve a case for nucs is a challenge, but simply an invigorating one.) Non-prolif by counter-prolif, preemption, regime change of “world’s worst regimes...”; underground sites for development, production, storage.... “Dangerous world.”)

p. 4, Deterrence, I n Theory

[BOOK: Note that the calculations in a deterrence situation (esp. involving WMDs) are—all of them—extremely *ambiguous*. Game situation, in which crucial options have never been tried, though threatened, crucial outcomes never remotely experienced. Rationality of players is not at all to be assumed, in any sense; nor their perceptions of options and outcomes. (Experience is enough to confirm both of these points: though not all players, or even most of them, seem aware of this, perhaps as much as many members of the public.) Control of instruments/”options” by leading officials is less assured than most of them realize. Awareness of this increases subjective ambiguity; even with lack of awareness, there will exist “objective ambiguity” in the sense of highly contradictory estimates.]

W notes that “*deterrence* and the *threat of nuclear destruction* are not interchangeable concepts.” (her ital) p. 4. Since threat of conventional overwhelming force can be a deterrent [see SU threat to Europe, 1945-54]. She doesn’t note that with a big difference between first-strike and second-strike capabilities, FU and FS threats of nuclear destruction can be a provocation to preemptive or preventive attack, not a deterrent! (Khrushchev bluffs of nuc production in late Fifties were dangerous, as was his deployment to Cuba: they could have tipped US to attack over Berlin or Cuba. Likewise, Reagan threats in 1983 were very dangerous!

On the other hand, US brinkmanship was **not** as dangerous in the Fifties and early Sixties in provoking an SU attack as its critics—including **me**—imagined: because the SU had neither a significant FS or second-strike capability **against the US** (though JFK and McNamara were more deterred than, say, the JCS, by even a small SU capability; though not so deterred as to refrain from taking risks over Cuba that were much greater than even they realized.) At the same time, the SU did pose a major threat against Europe, which they may reasonably have supposed provided them with strong deterrence; though as far as I can tell, this was scarcely taken into account, certainly not by the JCS and not obviously even by the civilians.

So what, W asks, is especially “tailored” about Bush II’s deterrence? [Hyp: it may refer to a huge number of “limited options,” both in nature of forces and control, for generalized use, and focused on specific regions or states or parties. The sort of thing Nixon wanted, and perhaps Carter got (! We don’t know!), both focused on the SU: but now, expanded to many regions. The **Jonathan Swift/Bertrand Russell** (? Or was it in *Esquire*, or *Fortune*) concept of an orbiting spaceshift (Laputan) that could destroy any spot on the surface of the earth; see USAF interest in space now).

The issue I keep returning to, in commenting on her use of the words “deterrence” and “retaliation” (p. 5) is: “deterrence of what? Retaliation to what?” The AJW “Delicate Balance” thesis that it was “challenging” to make (sufficient) nuclear retaliation to SU nuclear first-strike or even to massive SU aggression in Europe credible **was a delusion and deception, a snare**. Thus it is misleading to put it, as W does, that “Throughout the Cold War, the challenge for US nuclear policy was to make the threat of nuclear retaliation,

and therefore the US deterrent posture, credible.” In the above terms, this was the “challenge” posed by AJW/RAND/JFK and Nixon both in 1960 campaign/the JCS and Goldwater in 1964/the Gaither and Rockefeller Reports.; and it has persisted till the end of the CW in US declaratory policy and public understanding. It was the “test,” the “challenge” our leaders, media and the MIC **posed** to us, the public and tax-payers, for their own special interests.. It was simply a false “problem”; it called for no new efforts, no “solution”; it was easy to achieve this credibility (since 1945) and had always been achieved, over-achieved. (Indeed, to the point of provoking a large SU force eventually, subject to false alarm and loss of crisis control, a genuine **non-deterrable** danger, even provocative in a crisis. This was not inevitable; it could easily have been avoided, as China essentially did.

The real challenge they faced was to make credible—in the face of SU and eventually Chinese possession of nuclear weapons (and now, other potential nuclear adversaries)—the threat of US nuclear “retaliation” to *non-nuclear* and limited “provocations” by adversaries, whether Communist, allies of Communists, or neither. And thus to deter *these* “provocations,” or challenges to our (imperial, worldwide, commercial or geo-political)” interests.”

(Our leaders would like the latter challenges to be understood by our public as “threats to our population and welfare as a whole, threats to our national security”—without public discussion or examination of just what are the linkages to our general welfare and safety of, say, election of a social democratic regime in a Third World country that would raise local wages, reduce foreign (US corporate) profit-taking, improve the local safety net: or nationalize oil or mineral development. (Parenti claims this determined the US relation to the Taraki regime in Afghanistan.)

To be sure, in our informal empire, the latter challenges are generally met by covert action, not invasion. Since WWII, it is *armed intervention* that is a last resort (or more precisely, not the first resort); but where local resistance is or might be enhanced by foreign aid, to a point that threatens the success of US intervention, nuc FU (and the need to deter nuc response by anyone, requiring US FS capability) is in the tacit but not distant background. [See, in 1980, the Carter hidden nuc crisis in Iran! Or Iraq 1991, 2003 (fear of WMDs, not, in the first instance, external support; likewise, Iran. Cuba 62. VN, 1954-75. By contrast, nuc weapons were not involved even in the background for Panama or Grenada or Haiti or the DomRep: realistically-sized US imperial interventions, illegal but feasible.

Thus, according to W (p. 5) The 1950s doctrine known as “massive retaliation” envisioned a “simultaneous, massive, integrated” U.S. nuclear strike against targets in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and China if the Soviet Union or its allies initiated any nuclear or conventional attack against the United States or its allies.”

Simply wrong. This isn’t the “massive retaliation” doctrine at all. She fails even to mention the real context of the doctrine, when announced in early 1954: it was Indochina, Dienbienphu! And the scale or exact location of the “retaliation” was always left totally ambiguous (in contrast to the case she refers to, of general war. I wonder where she gets her adjectives in quotes: no ref.)

It’s true that doubts were raised as to willingness to execute general war plans in the event of SU aggression against Europe, given that this would have led to the destruction of Europe (if that mattered to Ike) or, **supposedly**, to the total destruction of the US. (Many

supposed wrongly that 1) any use anywhere of nucs would lead to total worldwide use; and 2) that massive use anywhere would be suicidal, due to fallout alone, for the initiator (US). Prior to 1964, this reflected widely mistaken beliefs in SU capabilities. After 1964, doubts were indeed justified, in terms of the utter irrationality of NATO FU not only from the European perspective (which had been true since 1954 or so) but for the US. But ironically, US actual posture and loose control (and delegation) made a US nuclear response (at least from Europe) highly likely, whatever the fears and reservations of US and European leaders.

[Book: Need for correcting the understanding of the actual changes involved in my/McNamara/Kaufmann/Enthoven options papers, guidance, counterforce and then MAD; real purposes; and real effects, if any. Real underlying attitudes: see McN, me, et al. And discuss Athens, Ann Arbor, NATO speech, etc. [Note: MAD even as a rhetorical doctrine doesn't confront the problem of "credibility" of US FS response in Europe. The reality is that "credibility" of US First-strikes against the SU—for an attack on Europe or for any other reason—is unattainable, for "rational" leadership, except as a (real!) derivative of potential loss of control (I earlier included this under "madness," but it's not best described by this, except for the actual recklessness of allowing this to persist and basing a policy on it: the madness of actual, still-existing otherwise normal and sane leaders and followers, **normal human madness, ordinary madness, the madness of normal humans. (If the supposed behavior of lemmings were real, it would amount to normal lemming madness.** If it's not real, is this behavior **peculiar** to humans? See Easter Island. Might stampeding cattle, or sheep, be led over a precipice?)]

Supposedly, there were various modifications in targeting strategy and deterrence policy through the mid-60's, 70's (see Schlesinger), 80's (Reagan), 90's... Actually, the SIOP and limited options probably didn't change much in nature: just steady "refinement" (!) and multiplication of options. Increased focus on "decapitation", attacks on control, and "ethnic targeting" (! Brzezinski; explicitly genocidal), with rhetorical shift from "population per se" (Nixon! Because of genocide convention!).

All ignoring

a) the continuous madness of all this (along with immorality beyond all human experience in scale of murderousness, though not in its nature: "normal, human, traditional projected massacre") (and with no adaptation to the discovery of the problem of nuclear winter in 1982);

b) the fact that large-scale nuclear war had become irretrievably insane since 1964, under Brezhnev (and risking it, or encouraging proliferation, by FU, only marginally less so);

c) and at the same time, that the supposed "threat" to Europe, the "need" for these desperate and immoral measures had virtually vanished (the "problem" for which these were dangerous, highly costly and hopeless attempted "solutions" had disappeared! Even ignoring the real, classified history, that the "problem" had **always** been deliberately, massively overblown, along with the difficulty of meeting it, such as it was, by non-nuclear military means or diplomatic means). Yet the forces and efforts remain in place.

[**Note:** the similarity of effect of focusing on 1) "what if deterrence of SU surprise attack fails?" (AWM)—how do we limit damage?" to focusing on "the ticking bomb problem" in deciding torture policy or ban.]

How did analysts manage to worry about (detering) a SU surprise attack, from 1964 to 1985 (or since) **as if** the image of Soviet leaders ready and eager to launch an attack as soon as they perceived a possible vulnerability, were soundly based, incontrovertible (at least, as a realistic worst case), validated by experience and all evidence (just as it was imagined to be, on no evidence, in the Fifties), rather than as having been exposed in 1961 as a paranoid chimera over the preceding sixteen years and as having even less rational basis since the death of Stalin in 1952 (with Stalin misperceived as = Hitler)?!

Perhaps the answer is, in part:

1) The missile gap was not soundly and authoritatively exposed as a fraud, in its full dimensions, in the minds either of the public or of analysts and officials, leading to a real self-criticism and reexamination of the paradigm, in the period late-1961 to 1964. That included, after all, the Berlin and then the Cuban Missile crisis, which were not conducive to revising the misperceptions of Khrushchev, or to even hypothesize him (as seen correctly by Gorbachev and his advisers) as an early dove and disarmer.

2) After Brezhnev in 1964 and his successors, the actual Soviet buildup corresponded to the “crash, massive” effort wrongly **imagined** to be occurring in the Fifties (bombers and missiles). In neglect and ignorance of **what led up to this radical change in SU policy and posture**, what “provoked” it (in terms of the Cuban Crisis, the concerns about Berlin and German nuc armament, and earlier US FU threats, the vast US superiority until then)—in ignorance even that it **was** a radical change in SU policy, effort (not just a continuation of the supposed first-strike efforts of the Fifties, which had not in fact existed)—US analysts could perceive this as a vast, costly effort to achieve a first-strike capability for the SU. So presumably the SU leaders felt such a capability was worthwhile; they must contemplate possibly using it, at least as a threat.

In short, the answer to the question above is that since 1965-68 US analysts and public have been “confronted” with the massive, concrete reality of a Soviet Doomsday Machine (like the US one), and an expanding, “improving” one. They ask, “why?” and they arrive at answers like those of the Fifties, when their predecessors imagined an (illusory) comparable Machine (in the hands of inscrutable—and genuinely tyrannical and secretive, though much less so than Stalin or Hitler—regime. Even though those answers had been wrong then, and shown to be so, and there was even less reason to suppose them correct in the later period.

What they did not consider was that Brezhnev was simply imitating the US posture, to respond to the perception, the “lesson” of Cuba-II, that the SU could not aspire to equal diplomatic status, to moving beyond subordinate status to sharing “the same set of superpower rules” with the US, unless it did so. It could not allow blatant US strategic “superiority” as existed in, and until, 1962. But rather than trying to gain Soviet “superiority” in any useful sense, or to use it as the US did use its actual superiority in the preceding 18 years (let alone, more aggressively than the US did: as Hitler would have, for example, or as US hawks would have preferred), this was compatible with Brezhnev and his subordinates recognizing fully **that neither such superiority, nor such advantages or uses of superiority, would any longer be available to either party.**

From the time that an essential **parity** was achieved—about 1968 (or sooner, between 1963-68)—real strategic nuclear “advantage” was unattainable for either party. The only rationale—a truly thin one—for even making the effort to continue to match “advances” (like MIRV, and precision, and ASW, or BMD)—as both actually did—was to suggest that

one's leaders did not really recognize this stalemate (the infeasibility of significant damage limitation) and might act more "irrationally," "madly, recklessly" in a crisis, so the other must continue to tread carefully. The alternative was just to stop racing, unilaterally or better, to seek mutual radical reductions, seek the negotiated approaches that had truly been available (on the SU side) since at least the death of Stalin, if not before. (Stalin = Hitler had been the equation that supposedly ruled out advantageous negotiated, coordinated behavior.)

So why did not Brezhnev or his successors (until Gorbachev) seize these alternatives? Well, why didn't the US? Hardly anyone—other than E.P. Thompson—supposed: for much the same reasons in both cases. Thompson posed an isomorphism between the two systems—each not having but being a military-industrial complex. All the profits, statuses, power, competitive (domestic) advantages, alliance benefits were on the side of continuation of the US pursuit of superiority.

Superior is now unattainable, and has been for about 45 years. But I repeat the point, **this was not comparably true in the first eighteen years of the CW (Cold War). A meaningful superiority was not unattainable—for the US, only—during that period.** Thus, credible first-strike threats were possible, as escalatory threats (without the fear of imminent SU preemption or first-strike, i.e. not only as preemptive threats or threats of "loss of control" such as still persist).

Moreover, given the contingency of an "irrational" SU first-strike, from a false alarm or loss of control, it was a meaningful objective to "limit damage" to the US by a preemptive attack, or launch under attack, or "second-strike damage-limiting": as Andrew Marshall pointed out to me in 1960. Since about 1965 (!) that objective has persisted, as a major rationale for the actual posture, without offering real promise of limiting damage very significantly, if at all.

[A new thought: **Without the Cuban Missile Crisis US "victory,"** that earlier asymmetry might not have changed even in 1964, if Khrushchev had stayed in office. The Brezhnev buildup might well not have occurred in the SU. Nor might there have been what EP Thompson described as the isomorphism, the continuation of the SU imitation of the US first-strike posture (reducing crisis stability, as well as building up forces on both sides) in pursuit of parity. That was a cost of our victory! (For which we got...what? Great acclaim for JFK—for the remaining one year of his life—and avoidance of possible Republican victory in 1964 (Goldwater?! That would have been serious!); and false lessons about the reliability of US coercive diplomacy, that served us badly in Vietnam over the next ten years.

(Ask PDS, Kuznick: **What would have followed if JFK had traded the Turkish missiles on Sunday, (having not made RFK's ultimatum about shooting down a US plane, Saturday night, and Castro's gunner having failed to shoot one down). Would there have been a "coup"? Would assassination have been all the more assured, or come earlier? Or, would he or LBJ have been defeated in 1964? What might he, or LBJ, have done in 1964—e.g. in Vietnam!—to overcome the stigma of the Democratic acceptance of defeat and win the election? Might Goldwater have won? What would that have meant for the nuclear arms race, and escalation in Vietnam? (Was the risk-taking, then, after all—at least, the last day of it, which brought "victory—worthwhile, not only for domestic political reasons but for world stability? (Was anyone, like McGeorge Bundy, or JFK, thinking concretely about 1964 and these prospects in avoiding a trade on Saturday: or were they just thinking about NATO?)]**

(McNamara supposed in the mid-60's that the Soviets would "rationally" be content with parity in the form of about 400 missiles—what he would have preferred to limit Minuteman to—or at the most 1000 (like the US). He didn't foresee their going well beyond this. Yet he seemed to have ignored his own decision to pursue MIRV, (limited) ABM, and accuracy! He knew we didn't "need" these—so why should the Soviets waste money on them? Answer: they—perhaps wrongly—had drawn from C-II the lesson that having anything less than the US had put them at a disadvantage (rather than the lesson that McNamara would have endorsed: they were at a disadvantage only in being **so far** behind the US in second-strike capability, which they could easily eliminate without wasting money on parity). Brezhnev's political bargain with his military was: "You can have all the toys the JCS have, you will have no reason for envy." This gave them far in excess of what was needed to satisfy ----- bitter prediction to McCloy after C-II: "You'll never be able to do this to us again."

[A thesis of book: the "victory" of C-II was bought at the price of the reproduction in Russia of a second Doomsday Machine: ending for at least a generation (thanks to a regrettable, false lesson drawn by the Soviets, which we did nothing to avert) the possibility of dismantling the first. And then, when a new possibility opened for dismantling both after a generation (27 years), both (but especially the US) again was lured by thoughts of "victory" achieved and prospective to allow both machines to persist and remain oiled and ready.

[Recall Oppenheimer's image of two scorpions in a bottle, each able to destroy the other but only at cost of its own destruction. (See the scorpion being carried across the river by the frog.) But this was misleading as a description of the inevitable or actual situation for the first 19 years or so. Though the SU might have been able to overrun Europe (at probable cost of its own destruction! So...?!) it lacked the capability to destroy the US, either first or second. There was, after all, for that full early generation of the CW only one "scorpion" in the bottle.

BOOK: The SU **might never** have paid the price of acquiring that costly capability (even in the absence of US readiness for disarmament negotiations or even a CTB) if Khrushchev (who wanted demobilization!) **had not been goaded, first, into deploying missiles to Cuba and then been forced unilaterally to remove them!**

If we think of a genie that, released from a bottle, could destroy a superpower, or perhaps, carelessly, cause nuclear winter, there was from the beginning not one genie in that bottle but two, one Soviet: and eventually there would be a number of them. (The French need only more testing; likewise the Chinese; or Japan or Germany: all in the short run).

To keep the Soviet genie in the bottle, we could not let out "ours": or at least, we would have to be restrained in the tasks we gave it. We were, relatively, say, to what Hitler would have done: or LeMay, or Goldwater, or McCain (or Nixon or Bush II, if they had come along before 1964: Nixon had only been VP, less cautious than Ike). But not restrained enough, in Berlin or Cuba. With the exposure of the "missile gap," in late 1961, there was not sufficient time before the Cuban Missile Crisis, while worrying about Berlin and Cuba/Mongoose, to reflect on the fact that the Soviets had **not** freed their genie after all, they had not built a Doomsday Machine, and they **might** be persuaded not to do so at all! This was not—then, or ever, just as it had not been earlier—recognized as an object of policy! It was never a subject of discussion inside the government in the Fifties or the Sixties.

And outside the government, antinuclear critics did not appreciate the extent of the difference between what the US had acquired and was still building and what the Soviets

actually had (or the French, UK, later China); so they didn't, either, conceive of the options of holding down the non-US capabilities (by limiting the scale and uses of the US capabilities).

Now, for the last forty years, both Doomsday genies are out of their container. And the stopper is not on very tight, for the next several genies. Two states, and more to come, with literally God-like powers of destruction, gods of war and wrath and jealousy like the Old Testament Jehovah (who sent the Flood and destroyed Sodom, and the former inhabitants of Palestine): a cosmology of rivalrous Spirits with demonic capabilities. (Note that to get disastrous wars, these rivals need not be entirely demonic or maniacal or malevolent or even mischievous in character: merely to have competing concepts of "the good," and of what is necessary or acceptable to do to attain it.)

Actually, these "genies" are simply human states, organizations of humans, led by humans, with ordinary human characteristics, but increasingly with thermonuclear weapons. As the NRA says, "Guns don't kill people, people kill people." Most easily and frequently, people with guns. And that, despite laws regulating (domestic, not international) violence, without banning guns.

26 January 2009

Woolf describes the target list—thousands needed to be destroyed even in a second strike, reliably—and the "triad" needed, for reliability, to destroy them: 12,000 warheads in the late 1980's, to discourage a Soviet first strike. [Actually, a minute fraction of these, reliably based (on submarines)—1/1000th?—would deter a strike out of the blue. { "But it's immoral to target cities." (!) "Of course; we would target twelve of your second-strike military targets that are near cities; that will kill a lot fewer civilians than your large counterforce second strike." Current doctrine: it's OK to kill *any number* of civilians as collateral damage, "without intent"; rather than to threaten a much smaller, limited number for deterrence.]

As for deterring preemptive attack: forces of this *nature*—their combination of warhead size and accuracy (and speed of arrival) and pre-launch vulnerability counts much more than their number, or warhead size alone (megatonnage) in affecting crisis stability (AJW did make this point, well: though the USAF and national policy effectively ignored it)—*create* a problem of crisis stability, an incentive for the adversary to strike first rather than second. "Modernization" by the US, and subsequently by the SU, continuously worsened this danger. The actual arms race proceeded on both sides as if each nation intended to worsen instability, to enhance the danger that one side or the other would preempt in a crisis. *And perhaps that was the (semi-conscious) US intent* (as I suggested in my MacArthur proposal, "The Construction of Instability") as the only basis, after parity had been achieved, of maintaining some credibility for the threat of escalation to deter SU nuclear response to US FUSU forces in Europe or an SU ally. The threat of instability, like the threat of loss of control.

But note: the **real** reasons for the triad, with its thousands of weapons: not second strike reliability or Type I deterrence, but a first-strike threat (always obscured from the American public—not the European leaders or publics!—including as recently as this paper); and the inertia, the irreversibility, of the posture that McNamara and his successors inherited, based on interests of the Services and the aerospace industry (and the Iron Triangle). There was **never** a serious argument, based on Type I deterrence, for more than tens to hundreds of survivable warheads. (McNamara mentioned 400, and even that high figure was based on a

“knee” in the SU damage curves, with more warheads than causing significantly less marginal damage.) His choice of 1000 Minuteman, and maintaining huge bomber and submarine forces, reflected only domestic political considerations, including MIC and Service: the least he could “get away with, avoiding impeachment.”

[Recall the motive for the fire-bomb raids on Japan: increasing and maintaining—despite bad weather over Japan—USAAF sorties in the spring of 1945, so the USAAF could claim a major role in the defeat of Japan (however spurious) so that it could become USAF, an independent service, with “60 groups.” So that an aircraft industry could be subsidized by war production at a high enough level to maintain a dominant R&D effort to keep the USAF “superior” to any other air powers (and maintain its independent status and its share—eventually dominant—of the defense budget, by its claims of the critical role of strategic bombing. For these aims, Japanese civilians had to be sacrificed, 1.2 million of them.) [BOOK thesis: in a “controversial” section?!]

As Woolf puts it, “this diverse and numerous force was thought to have the capability to persuade the SU that *any attack it launched* (ital added) would be met with an overwhelming response and an unacceptable amount of damage...[thus providing] a “robust *strategic deterrent*.” (her ital)

Once again: the attacks to be deterred were not only SU nuclear attacks on the US (Type I deterrence) but non-nuclear attacks by the SU or its allies or clients (Type II deterrence, “enhanced” deterrence, the US “nuclear umbrella” over its allies or client states). The latter Type II deterrence was based on a US FS capability—whose requirements actually drove the shape, nature and size of the US strategic forces-- that actually compromised, or lessened, US Type I deterrence, made it less than robust in a crisis! Moreover, it was a compelling provocation to a Soviet nuclear buildup, which actually occurred, creating a second Doomsday Machine targeted on the US and its allies. And because the SU chose to build up in imitation of the US (FS) Machine—in what I would say was a fatally flawed policy reflecting an erroneous Soviet “lesson” from the Cuban Missile Crisis that such isomorphism was required for geo-political parity—the result was a significant increase in crisis instability, lowering Type I deterrence *for both sides*.

A thought that occurs to me about the US Doomsday Machine. As Kahn originally conceived of such a machine, it could be set to be triggered by some arbitrary set of “provocations.” But the most obvious trigger would be a massive nuclear attack by one’s adversary. The US was formally committed to launching its Machine upon a massive SU non-nuclear attack on Europe (and potentially, even in response to SU takeover of Berlin). But beyond that, the JSCP directed execution of its general war plans upon “armed conflict with the SU.” And *if SU capabilities had been what the USAF intelligence estimated in the Fifties*, any of the FU threats we made in response to challenges by SU allies, at least after Korea—Taiwan Straits, Indochina, Iraq/Kuwait, Berlin, Cuba, Carter Doctrine—if executed, would have been *very likely* to have escalated to the point of setting off the Machine(s). In other words, the Machine would likely have been triggered by any of the non-nuclear challenges that evoked US FU threats! That would have been a system that Kahn described as “Doomsday-in-a-Hurry.”

What prevented that prompt arrival of Doomsday was, in large part, the non-execution of US FU threats (for a variety of reasons, including, not a sense of “taboo,” but a measure of prudent reservations among US decision-makers and its allies (see France in 1954) and definitely in its opponents; and the SU prolonged restraint in entering a full-scale nuclear arms race.

A hawk might argue that without the US buildup, the Soviets might really have striven for a comparable “superiority” and FS cap (as the hawks believed the SU were actually doing *despite* the US buildup). In other words, they might infer that the US was achieving in the Fifties (against their predictions at the time) the goal set by Cheney/Wolfowitz in 1992 and confirmed in 2002: to be so superior as to discourage any rival from even *attempting* to achieve parity, let alone superiority.

[Question: What was, really, the share of SU GDP taken up by the military, and in particular, strategic forces, in 1945-63, and then, in the Brezhnev era? (I don’t think E.P. Thompson makes this distinction.) Surely it was larger in the latter case; and it was this latter buildup that brought the SU system close to bankruptcy, as Gorbachev saw, even prior to SDI.]

But, as Gareth Porter has argued, the SU was really well aware that it was #2 in economic and industrial strength, and that even parity was well beyond its capabilities in the Fifties. Any attempt at superiority (if the US had shown the restraint against which the hawks argued then and now) would have evoked a US effort that would quickly have frustrated that aim. (The assertion that the SU in the Fifties was actually making such an effort and could achieve it was purely and simply an ideological—and Service/MIC-interested—hypothesis that reflected no hard evidence whatever: as the Army and Navy finally correctly concluded.)

Woolf on “Deterrence, After the Cold War”

With the collapse of the SU (and the potential cooperation with Russia) the strategic rationale for our first-strike capabilities against the US—which determined the scale and nature of our forces—disappeared. They were no more needed to back up the credibility of US FU threats against NNWS than were WWII-sized armed forces needed after the end of WWII (or comparably, after WWI or the Civil War). The end of the Cold War not only ended (for the foreseeable future requirements for “robust” (multi-genocidal) Type I deterrent forces; **it ended the (secret) requirement for Type II deterrence, disarming FS forces against the massive SU forces, either to deter a massive Soviet offensive against Europe (no longer even feasible) or to deter SU escalatory nuclear response to US FU against (former) SU allies.**

Moreover, there was no longer any justification for keeping these forces on ready alert, with its possibilities for false alarm (as in 1983 in the SU, many false alarms in the 80’s in the US, and the 1990? Yeltsin false alarm). Russia, under Gorbachev and even Yeltsin, was ready for radical reductions (quickly down to 1000) with inspection and dismantlement, and probably much lower. (See Gorbachev-Reagan at Reykjavik: abolition). There was no longer any strategic rationale for not dismantling the two Doomsday Machines (and launching joint policies that would prevent the emergence of any others).

This was true even if the US maintained—as it did, under Clinton as under Bush I—its FU policy. (Woolf citing Perry in 1995: “the US will continue to threaten retaliation, including nuclear retaliation, to deter aggression against the US, US forces, and allies.”) (FU threats in support of the US informal empire had also lost much of their strategic justification—though not their secret rationale—with the end of the CW, during which it was argued that any loss of US influence anywhere increased the strength and threat posed by a powerful global adversary. That supposedly urgent zero-sum conflict supposedly justified US interventions worldwide to prevent such erosion of empire, which in turn required and thus justified a US readiness to escalate to FU if necessary: as it might well be, far from our shores and close to allies of the SU. No cold war, and the declaratory justification for maintaining “the Free World” against Communist “subversion” by military force when necessary disappeared.

Remaining threats to our “interests” might still justify US military intervention (see the Carter Doctrine, about our vital interests in the Middle East) but could not easily, or let us say, morally, justify expanding the conflict to nuclear attacks. (Carter, in 1980, was still posing the possibility of “external”—Soviet—intervention in the ME; the CW was still on. Hence his nuclear threats.) By earlier standards—still valid in the eyes of most of the world (which didn’t accept the premises of the CW anyway)—such US FU, in a post-CW world, would all the more qualify as “the greatest crime against humanity.” **It could and should be ended by Obama; his statement during the campaign that he would not use nuclear weapons against Pakistan** (for which he was scorned and attacked by Hillary Clinton, his new Secretary of State) **should be made universally applicable.** (Unfortunately, he is unlikely soon to “remove this option from the table” in “negotiating” with Iran—any more than Clinton or the Republicans—although he should.)

Unfortunately, in the US, for many citizens the end of the CW meant a reduction in their inhibitions about US FU threats. There was no longer the risk that US FU almost anywhere would entail a danger of all-out nuclear war and the destruction of the US. So in 1991, a sizeable number of Americans accepted the possible use of US nucs to protect the lives of US soldiers or avoid a stalemate in the Gulf War, as well as to respond to Iraqi CW or BW (a real possibility at that time, possibly deterred by US and especially Israeli nuc FU threats).

With no more threat to Europe as an immovable obstacle to abandoning FU threats, its place was taken by a (Iraqi) threat of CW to US troops, either responding to Iraqi aggression (1990-91) or to US aggression (2003). The latter threat was hardly comparable to the former, or even very militarily significant (given military countermeasures). The easy maintenance of the US FU policy after the end of the CW reflects a considerably eroded aversion to nuclear weapons in the American public over time (in America as in Japan: less “nuclear allergy”) and in particular after the end of fear that FU would trigger the Domsday Machines.

The latter potential does remain, given the unconscionable policy of maintaining the alert forces on both sides. **That should have ended at least eighteen years ago** (along with the Bush-Gorbachev measures of removing nuclear weapons from ships, and taking the airborne command planes off alert). With the end of the CW, it has no strategic rationale whatever or justification, while maintaining a continuous, significant and inexcusable danger. (Obama could and in a sense should end it in a day, though politically he would be ill-advised to do it tomorrow, given generations of brainwashing of the public.)

But the danger has surely diminished, for the last generation.

[From file on the Hiroshima Myth (or, What If), January 26, 2009:]

I do happen to think that the misconceptions about Hiroshima play a significant role in this passivity. They give substance to the warnings by the Establishment that, even after the Cold War, US nuclear weapons *might again* be “needed” (as, it goes without saying to Americans, they once were, in 1945, and then, consensually, throughout the Cold War).

In terms of realities almost entirely unknown to the general public, I believe that there has *never* been a historical situation-- since the first test of a nuclear device in July, 1945—in which a nuclear threat or attack has been either “necessary,” legitimate, or justified in moral, legal or consequential terms. And that includes Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It applies to each and every one of the several dozen instances I have identified in which American presidents discussed, considered, and in many cases explicitly threatened the imminent first-use of nuclear weapons in a crisis or conflict since Nagasaki.

For the United States (starting, uniquely, with a situation in which, for the next several years at least, it alone had the capability to possess atomic weapons) the same judgments apply to the production, deployment and possession of nuclear *weapons on the scale and of the nature* of our actual nuclear forces at every moment of the nuclear era from 1945 to January 2009 and beyond. At not one moment since 1945 could our actual nuclear posture be regarded as legitimately justified by the circumstances actually prevailing.

To say that is not to assume that our officials could always have known those actual circumstances with high confidence, or sometimes, at all. It is not to deny that prevailing beliefs—sometimes plausible (though often contradicted by other experts, who turned out to be right)—often seemed to call for and legitimate the proposed and actual postures, despite their obviously catastrophically destructive potential. It is simply to say that in *every single instance*, every moment of that era, *those legitimating beliefs were mistaken*.

The rationales—often sincerely believed (though often not)—in terms of alleged facts and expert predictions, and arguments based on them *were always unfounded in reality*. *The conclusion, from year to year, that our nuclear posture and policies were “necessary” and therefore justified and legitimate—or that this was true of even larger, “modernized” forces-- has always been wrong in the past, up to the present.*

To use a current analogy, such judgments have been, in every year and every crisis, just as wrong as the argument that it was necessary and legitimate for the US to invade Iraq “because Saddam Hussein had secretly maintained a large arsenal of WMDs and an intense pursuit of nuclear weapons.”

That is an impressive historical conclusion, if true. It’s certainly not self-evident, or immediately acceptable, perhaps even plausible, to historical specialists or most well-informed anti-nuclear activists and critics. It needn’t be accepted just because I say it; but I do say it on the basis of very prolonged and intensive study of this history, enlightened by unusual personal inside experience during an earlier decade.

Even so, it doesn’t prove, of course, that the future, or the present, must be like the past. It doesn’t prove that current judgments that a large stock of nuclear weapons and threats of possible first-use are necessary and justified at this moment and in the foreseeable future must be unfounded and mistaken. All I say is that such judgments have always been wrong, and dangerously misleading, before. Always. In every case.

That *is* highly relevant to judging the reliability of these judgments in the present circumstances. That is, indeed, why my proposition is so widely contradicted by those advocating the continuation of our nuclear policies, why false factual beliefs to the contrary have been energetically promulgated for so long (to great effect).

After all, the *opposite* assertion is commonly used to bolster the plausibility of the need and justification for maintaining large forces now. Allegedly, “they were essential to save lives or protect our security in earlier periods—starting with Hiroshima, followed by the Cold War—so you should distrust those who would say they are not necessary or justified now.”

The first part of that proposition is almost universally accepted (except by real students of the Hiroshima decision!)—not merely “accepted” but taken for granted, consensually, so that someone contradicting it could suffer the credibility of a Holocaust denier.

I’ve stated my own contrary proposition carefully, to limit it, and it could easily be misunderstood. First, it applies to the United States only. We are the only country that has ever had a monopoly of nuclear weapons, or (earlier) the **possibility** of having a monopoly for at least a limited time. Thus, our leaders were the only ones tempted to exploit the benefits of having such a monopoly (rather than foregoing it, by unilateral decision or by agreement not to produce them **or** not to test them, or produce them, “first.”)

[That temptation was the stronger for the US political leaders because they believed (contrary to the scientists) that their monopoly was likely to persist “indefinitely” (Truman) or at least for a long time. (Groves and others put their trust in a determined program to control the world’s uranium deposits: ignorant, apparently, of significant deposits in East Germany). [**What if** Truman and Byrnes had been persuaded by the scientists’ conviction that the lead over the SU would be about four years, as it was? Granted, even the scientists’ prediction tended to roll, so that it was always four years ahead; the test in 1949 did surprise a number of them. It created consternation in Teller and Lawrence, though that may have been affected by their desire to see this event as a new stimulus to an H-bomb program.]

Then, ours is the only country whose leaders have been tempted by the real possibility of achieving a significant “*superiority*” in nuclear forces over its major rival. This reality has been thoroughly obscured by generations of warnings that the Soviets were determinedly seeking this, that they were on the verge of achieving it (“unless...”), or that they had actually achieved it. Some of these warnings were in good faith, many were not; **they were all wrong**.

But the public has never been made aware—either by officials or by specialist research—of just how far and how universally these warnings or assertions were from the reality. (The same or comparable interests are involved now in warnings about the Iranian nuclear program, or earlier, Saddam Hussein’s.) Thus, the public, and even most scholars, do not have in their minds, as they interpret the present in the light of their

understanding of the past, the reality of the first eighteen years or so of the nuclear era in which the US maintained a vast superiority of nuclear delivery capability, which was never in any danger of being lost. Nor do they realize that the Soviets knew this.

On the other hand, members of Congress, USAF, and the aerospace industry—the “Iron Triangle”—have been very conscious of the possibility and “essentiality” of maintaining “superiority” into the indefinite future. (ABM and space warfare was meant to do this even in the latter stages of the Cold War.) They see it as having been essential to our past foreign policy and security, as having greater potential benefits than our highest leaders have realized or ever exploited, and as essential to our security in the future.

I would say that this belief reflects their special interests much more than valid lessons of experience, though I would also say that, much more frequently than almost any outsider realizes, presidents have relied on this superiority and found it useful. (JFK in Berlin and Cuba; Eisenhower in earlier crises. Threats from Nixon on, however, have been made in a context of effective parity, i.e. without superiority.) Even Eisenhower and JFK, however, the two presidents who actually presided over periods of great US superiority, saw it as limited in time, as being actually unattainable within a few years, and as having limited utility. Their threats were defensive of a status quo (like later ones), rather than having the ambitious aims of roll-back that some hawks would have preferred.

It is time for Obama to attack the notion of attainable strategic nuclear “superiority”—either for the US or for Russia—as a total myth for at least the last forty years. The case must be made on the basis of Nuclear Glasnost (which will reveal that damage-limiting in a preemptive or escalatory first-strike by the US was not infeasible—whether its pursuit was good or (in reality) bad—for the first generation of the nuclear era, but has been so ever since. (Recent arguments by L—and--- that the deterioration of the Soviet posture has brought a “good” first strike by the US within the realm of feasibility, depend on a very high level of the damage to the US and its allies (do they consider the latter?) and the risk of still greater damage that is “acceptable.”)

Obama could and should immediately reinstate the Clinton commitment to the steps outlined in the 2000 NPT Conference (rescinded, in effect, by Bush) and revitalize the negotiations and unilateral measures to implement them. Several of these should be realizable quickly, brushing aside any Republican objections: ending production of weapons-usable material, a CTB, resuming disarmament negotiations with Russia aiming immediately at lower ceilings. (Radical reductions might have to wait for preparing the domestic ground; likewise, unhappily, NFU—to prepare the ground in the Obama/Clinton administration itself!)

Let me return to my major proposition above, namely: *The conclusion, from year to year, that our nuclear posture and policies were “necessary” and therefore justified and legitimate—or that this was true of even larger, “modernized” forces-- has always been wrong in the past, up to the present.*

The second point to be made about this proposition is that it is **not** asserted for every other nation that has acquired nuclear weapons. I would say that it **was** justified and reasonable for the SU to develop and deploy some nuclear weapons, in the face of the US programs.

That is not to say that it was not “obligatory”, as Stalin thought. I would even question whether it was their “best” approach, compared to determined effort to reach agreement, making some concessions: e.g., about inspection (not that the USG really wanted these, or an agreement). And they were definitely unwise in the Fifties to make the bluffs about either bomber production or ICBM production that they did make, to the great benefit of US hawks. Likewise, their construction of a first-strike Doomsday Machine in the Sixties and later was as unjustified as the US model, a disastrous imitative choice for the prospects of human survival. Nevertheless, a limited deterrent force (on the lines of the Chinese, below) did “make sense” and was arguably legitimate in the Fifties, and would have remained so subsequently (even in defense—against nuclear attack!—of a tyrannical, illegitimate regime).

The Chinese, by contrast, did pursue a limited program after 1964 (perhaps for economic limitations, it was assumed; but despite recurrent US warnings of Chinese buildup, they have persisted in this choice in the last generation of fast economic progress, wisely). Again, I think they were justified in this—as a counter to real prospects of nuclear attack from the US-- and have even benefited by it, on balance. Notably, they have been almost alone in a continuous, proclaimed policy of no-first-use; and also a voice for universal abolition.

Putting the UK and French programs aside, a fairly strong case could be made for the initial Israeli program, though those who opposed it at the time in the Israeli cabinet (a majority!) had at least as strong a case, even in retrospect. (One effect of this program was to create a strong constituency-bloc in the US opposing no-first-use and other effective measures against proliferation as US policy, even after the end of the Cold War, just as the Israeli lobby was a strong voice in general for US militarism and an increasing arms budget. It's understandable that Israeli policy-makers would not have considered this as a cost or defect of their own program, but world security (ultimately, including their own) has suffered for it.

(Each country that acquires nuclear weapons subtracts itself from the set of nations that could **potentially** be a strong voice and pressure against proliferation or use. But not every new nuclear weapons state, by joining the club, generates newly strong pressures *within the US* (the key nation in this context) against effective non-proliferation measures. That was done by the Soviets: justifiably, in their first efforts: recklessly, later (both by their bluffs and then by the scale and nature of their actual buildup under Brezhnev). (Not the Chinese, given their very limited deployment). But also by Israel, because of the Zionist lobby (including Christian Zionists, in the last generation) in the US.]

(A running critique of the Israeli program was that it would shortly, or eventually, provoke nuclear programs in some or all of its neighbors. But it must be acknowledged that this fear has not yet been realized, after nearly half a century.)

I am rejecting, then, the proposition that the **possession** of nuclear weapons, by any given country, could never be justified. (Father McSorley: "It is a sin to possess a nuclear weapon.") Not only can deterrence "exist" and work, but there can be and have been circumstances in which possession of **some** nuclear weapons is justified, and even be reasonably claimed to be the best policy.

That has never been true—such circumstances have never actually obtained-- for the actual programs and policies of the US—since late 1944. (A case can be made for the possession of some nuclear weapons (a minute fraction of the actual US stockpile) as a component of a US policy truly aimed at reaching reliable agreement on abolition, prior to its achievement.)

From 1939-44, it was reasonable to fear that the probability of a crash German atomic program justified a crash US effort at *development* and possibly testing, production and even use of an atomic weapon. Even at that time the US effort *should* have been accompanied—as it was not—by urgent consideration of the wartime and postwar measures necessary to "rebottle the nuclear genie" if it proved necessary to use it against Germany, or to keep it bottled if it had not been (as was the case).

The Franck Committee conducted its investigation at last, in the spring of 1945, too late for any but heroic measures to make its recommendations known and effective. And heroism was not forthcoming (though considered by its rapporteur, Rabinowitz: and rejected, to his later regret, and that of Szilard). With earlier consideration, Rotblat would not have been the only scientist to conclude that the crash program should halt, short of testing (and to withdraw his own participation).

Again, I would say that the fears at RAND in 1956-61 were reasonable, or not unreasonable, given SU secrecy and bluffs and the perceived vulnerabilities of the US posture. (The Soviets did, just a year later, manage to convey IRBMs and MRBMs and warheads to Cuba with a total secrecy from our surveillance that many would have thought infeasible. To some extent that validated the reasonableness of earlier USAF warnings—though not their certainty, nor the predictions themselves—that they might be successfully concealing a large ICBM program.)

Contrary, again, to "absolutists" on the immorality and unjustifiability of nuclear possession and even buildup, it still seems to me that *if circumstances had truly been what our national intelligence estimates of 1958 claimed and predicted—both on SU programs and on estimates of SU (Hitler-like) aims and proclivities—then the RAND-recommended strengthening of US second-strike capabilities for deterrence (not the actual USAF/JCS posture, with its first-strike aims and capabilities) would have been justified.*

In the actual case, neither of these sorts of estimates was anywhere close to reality. And one can say that “should” have been known by high policy-makers, *as it was to the most informed and reliable specialists*. (E.g., Ray Garthoff at RAND, for which he was let go). Failure to know it reflected a “need not to know” by the Iron Triangle. It was not even “reasonable” to hold these mistaken views with anything like the degree of certainty that was actually believed, or proclaimed. (Few did, outside the government or MIC: as I found in discussions at the Society of Fellows in 1958-59. But I attributed this skepticism simply to lack of exposure to the Secret and Top Secret estimates and analyses I was reading. I was wrong, though not entirely.

Voltaire: He who can make you believe absurdities, can make you perform atrocities.

It was not “impossible” that Hitler-like leadership *could* exist in the late-Fifties (which was the only period when, by virtue of their one technological lead over the US, in ICBMs, the SU “could” by great effort have achieved a meaningful superiority and a real disarming first-strike capability) and that it might have striven for and perhaps achieved that capability and even used it. The actual evidence at the time did not justify a belief that this was the case high enough (let alone, near-certain: as was believed at RAND and claimed by USAF intelligence and to some extent, to their discredit, the CIA) to come anywhere near justifying the actual US policies—either our force posture and increases, or our (lack of) arms control efforts.

But to say (as Peter Weiss probably would) that any US concern with deterrence, or a deficiency of deterrence, *necessarily* and always implies “bad faith,” or immorality/sin, is to say, I believe, that it is *impossible* that a situation like that expressed in the NIE’s of the late Fifties could exist, or could reasonably be feared, with high likelihood to exist; *or else* (which Weiss probably does believe) that even that situation would not justify strong deterrent measures. I don’t believe either of these propositions. In the case of the Fifties, that judgment can indeed appear self-serving for me; it tends to apologize for my own involvement (and that of my colleagues) in trying to strength deterrence by enhancing our retaliatory capability. I recognize that and do my best to allow for it; I still hold to the judgment. (The apologetic aspect only goes so far; I don’t excuse myself for accepting these mistaken views of the situation so uncritically, even though they seemed validated by official intelligence estimates and by all my brilliant and respected colleagues.)

(About a decade ago, when Weiss discovered that I still regarded the concept of deterrence as having some validity—for some, in some circumstances—he said, affably, “You’ve only become *half* moral, since your RAND roots.” When I raised the question of the morality, in his eyes, of the Russian or Chinese programs, he became evasive.)

In sum, as I see it, fears of the real Hitler acquiring nuclear weapons justified the initial years of the Manhattan Project. But not its neglect of larger, long-run considerations, including a *readiness* to forego testing and use. (According to Kuznick, reflecting a memoir note by Truman’s daughter, Stimson raised this possibility in his very first

briefing to Truman. But if so, there's no evidence that he or anyone raised it again, until the Franck Report, which did not reach either Stimson or Truman before Hiroshima).

And the "missile/deterrence gap" projections of the late Fifties—if they had been "reasonable" or accurate (resting as they did on the plausible, widely-accepted, but wrong SU=Hitler equation)—would, in my opinion (contrary to Weiss) have justified a RAND-like program of lessening the vulnerability of US retaliatory forces.

(Keep in mind that the actual US "response" to these warnings was not RAND's, but, as usual, a build-up of US first-strike capability. That would have made the problem *worse*, weakening deterrence and provoking SU preemption in a crisis, if the alleged USAF fears had been justified (and sincerely held). That could be explained as incoherence and inertial routine and ideology leading to incompetent and counterproductive responses. Or, as I think, it can be taken as evidence that USAF knew as well as the Army and Navy intelligence that their claims were unfounded; its objectives were quite different from averting SU surprise or preemptive attack, and their response was suited to their real objectives.)

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[Come back to:

nowadays in OPLAN 8044—new form of the SIOP, a "family of plans" (as of 2003, at least)—"many of the same types of targets as the US planned to attack during the Cold War because the ability to destroy these types of facilities is likely to remain important to the US ability to defeat an enemy and limit damage to itself during a conflict. These targets could include deployed and non-deployed stocks of weapons of mass destruction, other military facilities, leadership facilities, and possible, other economic targets." (Woolf, p. 12)

[To defeat an enemy—not Russia, not an SU as a global adversary—when would it be necessary to hit any of such targets *with nuclear weapons*? Even the SU: where do the last three categories fit in either "defeating" (not possible) or "limiting damage" even before 1964, when it *was* possible. "Other military facilities? Economic targets?

For SU (or a NWS) leadership facilities do offer the possibility of decapitation: along with the danger of making the war unstoppable; and, now, extreme fallout from attacks on deep underground shelters. Other economic targets? Analyze that inclusion, that holdover from the Trenchard/LeMay terror bombing of WWII, or the notion of exterminating the Communist menace and "prevailing" in all-out war (hopefully, by having more survivors than the SU).

p. 13: "Need" for 1700-2200 "operationally deployed warheads" by the end of 2012 (SORT 2002, the Moscow treaty) is, in part, to "assure its allies of its commitments to their security, dissuade potential adversaries [or friends?] from seeking to challenge or compete with the US [rejection of parity], deter conflict with adversaries, and defeat an adversary if deterrence should fail." (NPR 2002)

The first, third and fourth of these effectively call for a US disarming, FS capability. But which adversary, other than Russia (with an inflated target list: still including cities, no?) calls for a force like this, even for a FS? (which wouldn't defeat Russia, anyway, or limit damage: HAVE HEARINGS ON THIS!). For other adversaries: 1700 TN weapons?! "You're kidding!" (No).

How could they now (how could they ever?) justify the inclusion of any, even one, "urban-industrial" or "economic" target?

How could they now, or ever, justify targeting and weapon assignment and lay-down plans that did not *minimize* "collateral damage," damage to civilians or, indeed, the possibility of postwar recovery?

All these are hold-overs from **mistaken, essentially insane** theories of how to fight a conventional war against a major adversary: theories that were actually put into practice, to murderous effect, and essentially disproven even for WWII! (LeMay and the AAF may have convinced itself that firebombing in Japan was effective in bringing the Japanese to surrender, but neither the Navy nor the USSBS would agree).

The very objective, after 1945, of "destroying the capability of the SU to **recover**" (along with the objective of exterminating as many Soviet citizens as possible) was **criminally insane** for the entire postwar period. How the US could have come to institute such a policy deserves the closest investigation: it challenges the imagination, and any easy explanation, other than the easiest: the effects of our policy in WWII at producing **depraved bloodmindedness** in the USAF and for that matter in its military colleagues, along with highest civilian leaders (none of whom cared enough, or had the guts, to challenge SAC planning on this).

Question for Obama: Has STRATCOM planning dropped all such "options"? Can it give the slightest excuse for **planning** to carry out such attacks?

"Well, what then do you threaten, for deterrence of attacks? Especially, with much smaller forces? (from 400 down to 100 to...)"

- a) The "existential threat" to cities posed by the very possession of any nuclear weapons—as a response to a nuclear attack, whether on cities or on military forces—cannot be reduced to zero or to some small probability (especially in the face of the last sixty years of planning, and WWII practice)! That is true even if peacetime planning determinedly rejects any such planning; and even if this were publicized (as it should be). To attack with nuclear weapons a country armed with strategic nuclear weapons with **confidence** that one's own cities will not be attacked ("because of intra-war deterrence, based on initial avoidance of cities and large reserves": my second-strike draft guidance) requires a level of reckless insanity that implies an opponent who is "non-deterrable" by **any** nuclear posture. That is as true if "the most" he would have to fear is a dozen TN weapons, or five, as if our reserves force were 1000 or 2000. The whole psychological model that implied "delicacy" of deterrence in that case is absurd, simply a way of selling weapons.

(Iran does not need, Korea does not need, Saddam Hussein would not have needed, a thousand or a hundred or fifty survivable and deliverable weapons to have robust deterrence of a US nuclear attack. Nor did the SU. (Its problem in 1960-62 was that it didn't have ten such second-strike weapons against the US: and the JCS weren't concerned, that much, by the hundreds it had against Europe, when it came to making and meaning threats over Berlin and Cuba).

Now, Keith Payne—still at it!—and others are arguing that facing enemies much smaller than the SU we need new nuclear weapons more accurate and with much smaller warheads, since we don't want to impose "overwhelming levels of damage" (which were, supposedly, appropriate for the SU. Again, presumably the latter need was to deter an enemy that had enjoyed WWII—or at least, as AJW used to say, "had learned that it had recovered quite well from that, fairly fast"-- and wouldn't mind suffering those casualties again—or something less than the ten times WWII we planned for it— "to gain world domination.")

[Nuclear planning should be opened up for examination and critical discussion on the realistic assumption that the judgment nuclear "experts" inside (and outside) the government are no more to be trusted (unmonitored) than the Wall St. geniuses who just gave us the melt-down. A lot less, in fact. And as in both cases, this has nothing to do with IQ.

(See all the catastrophes examined in *Flirting with Disaster*; add WWI, the Titanic, Vietnam, Iraq, Katrina (global warming

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p. 16: Keith Payne and others argue that US needs new nuclear weapons, to make threats credible. Daryl Kimball, ACT, Nov 2005: "no adversary would believe" nuc threats, because such an attack would produce "disproportionate and unacceptable collateral destruction and severe political fallout."

[Disproportionate, yes: what attack would not be that. But unacceptable, to all US leaders: Hmmn, I wouldn't want to have to count on that. Or even "unacceptable" political fallout. (If used, say, against Iranian deep facilities, after an Iranian attack, non nuclear, on Israel?)

p. 17. E.g. Payne thinks we need larger number of over-yield weapons, so as to minimize collateral damage while destroying hardened or deeply buried targets.

[Who could defend, and how would they do it, a plan for the possible use of 2200 operationally deployed warheads---or 1000 (the new negotiation target, as of this morning!)—or "more than a few, or even a few dozen nuclear weapons"? Even in the only contingency for which this is planned—seeking "to destroy large numbers of weapons and facilities in Russia, or possibly in China"—*how could any really defend doing that?!*

How could anyone claim that even "dozens" of weapons were necessary for "extended deterrence"? Or defend using numbers like that (or any) to defeat an enemy? As for "dissuading" any rival from challenging the US with nuclear weapons or other "asymmetrical threats"—"convincing them that they can never negate the US nuclear deterrent"...Of course they can't! How many do you need to do that? (On a submarine, say).

[How Much is Too Much? At every point in time since 1945, we've always been above that level!]

[On dissuasion: Nuclear hawks "fear" that if the US arsenal is *too small*, it will encourage others to "match" it or even go beyond, i.e. acquire or build up their forces. They never worry that if our arsenal remains *large, too large, that* is an incentive for them, not to strive for "parity" (since Russia went broke trying that) but getting themselves an adequate deterrent against us! (Russia, or China; Iran)]

Need for a new "Roles and Missions Study" (inside administration and Congress)

[If BHO redefines the role of nuclear weapons—in a way that does not include a **disarming attack against Russia, either preemptively or as an escalation**—then much smaller numbers than 1000 become appropriate: as York said, "**closer to one than one hundred.**"!]

York was presumably not figuring in "extended deterrence." Will we legitimize and invite proliferation by going down to small number? Well, we've been legitimizing and inviting it by our past and present policies. This takes a close and comprehensive look, but it seems plausible that we can do a lot more to discourage proliferation than we've ever done, by going comprehensively in this direction. (The big worry in the Cold War was a German program; there seems NO motive for that now. Japan? Not if we move appropriately—unlike now!—to keep a lid on China and North Korea. **Who else "needs" that "umbrella" now?** (have I missed someone?)

This might be exactly the time for an overt, bold attack on the concept of continuing the nuclear "umbrella": extended deterrence.

AND "damage-limiting" against Russia (absurdly infeasible and counter-productive).

AND "first-use" threats!

p. 18. "There is widespread agreement both inside and outside government that the greatest threat to the US comes not from the nuclear challenge posed by a single adversary, as it did in the Cold War, but from the potential proliferation of nuclear weapons to an increasing number of nations, and possibly, terrorist groups. But there is little agreement about whether the continued US reliance on nuclear weapons **stems** proliferation by reminding nations of the risks they face if they challenge U security with their own weapons of mass destruction, or **spurs** proliferation by demonstrating that nuclear weapons can play a significant role in enhancing a nation's security." (emphasis added)

A problem with the latter position is that "abolition" can be the "best" that is truly the enemy of the (more immediately feasible) "good," or "better." Note that Kissinger feels able to endorse abolition as a goal, along with Nunn (a good guy, who doesn't believe in abolition) and Perry (who may be the same, or worse). That suggests strongly that HAK doesn't believe that an approach exclusively addressing abolition—while rejecting or ignoring NFU—will have *any* significant practical effect. And I tend to agree with that.

Granted that NFU doesn't explicitly reject "minimum deterrence-only"; nevertheless, it immediately, from one day to the next, disposes of any case for maintaining any but a very small number of survivable warheads (even unilaterally). And it undercuts the need for deterrence against US attack in those countries that have recently experienced US threats: Iran, Pakistan, North Korea (countries that do "need" their own deterrent, now, against the US "extended deterrent" or simply its "compellence.")